



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/759,331

01/15/2004

Adam M. Smith

035A.0001.U1(US)

7713

29683 7590 11/01/2007
HARRINGTON & SMITH, PC
4 RESEARCH DRIVE
SHELTON, CT 06484-6212

EXAMINER

VETTER, DANIEL

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3628

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

11/01/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/759,331	Applicant(s) SMITH ET AL.	
	Examiner Daniel P. Vetter	Art Unit 3628	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 August 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-7,9-17 and 19-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-7,9-17 and 19-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 August 2007 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 3628

DETAILED ACTION

Status of the Claims

1. Claims 1-20 were previously pending in this application. Claims 2, 8, and 18 were canceled; claims 1, 3, 7, 14, 16, and 20 were amended; and new claims 21-33 were added in the reply filed August 6, 2007. Claims 1, 3-7, 9-17, and 19-33 are currently pending in this application.

Drawings

2. Formal drawings were received on August 6, 2007. These drawings are accepted.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's amendment to claims 7 and 16 overcomes the rejection of claim 7-20 under § 112, second paragraph, and it is withdrawn.

4. Applicant argues on page 10 of the remarks that the teachings of the references are deficient to teach amended limitations of claims 1, 7, and 16 because in Stanfield, "any ability conduct 'votes or polls' is not related to travel per se, but is related to the convention, trade show and professional meeting that is the purpose of the trip." This argument is unpersuasive. The plain meaning of "related" is sharing an association or connection. Thus, given its broadest reasonable interpretation in light of the specification, the limitation "one of said tools enables trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to the travel arrangements" is met by a teaching, as provided by Stanfield ¶ 0022, of a polling tool that gives users the opportunity to vote on any issue that is associated with trip planning. Applicant concedes in the above quoted passage that the meetings mentioned in Stanfield are the purpose of the trip, and therefore have a definite association with trip planning. Moreover, the disclosure of Stanfield does not

Art Unit: 3628

limit the polling tool to matters unrelated to travel. Rather, the polling tool is present in a "reservation referral system" that necessarily makes the tool intertwined and associated with making reservations (§ 0022). It is at the very least implicit in Stanfield that the tool is enabled to conduct a poll, for example, on the dates of the conference (trip dates being explicitly mentioned as an example of a travel-related matter on page 9 of applicant's specification), as the reference has been applied assuming basic knowledge of one having ordinary skill in the art. Every reference relies to some extent on the knowledge of persons skilled in the art to complement its disclosure. *In re Bode*, 550 F.2d 656, 193 USPQ 12 (CCPA 1977). This example of the polling tool's use would be readily apparent to a skilled artisan upon a reading the references. "[I]t is proper to take into account not only specific teachings of the reference but also the inferences which one skilled in the art would reasonably be expected to draw therefrom." *In re Preda*, 401 F.2d 825, 826, 159 USPQ 342, 344 (CCPA 1968).

5. Applicant argues on page 10 of the remarks that, despite the examiner's taking Official Notice of certain facts, it would not have been prima facie obvious to incorporate being able to determine which trip participants will share lodging accommodations during the trip. Applicant has not stated or provided a reasoned analysis of why the above noticed facts are not considered common knowledge or well-known in the art as required by MPEP § 2144.03 to adequately traverse a finding of Official Notice, and has not requested documentary evidence to substantiate the finding. Even so, the examiner has provided the following references which provide documentary support for the above stated factual assertions:

- a. McNulty, U.S. Pat. No. 5,181,286 (Reference A of the attached PTO-892) teaches passengers that are traveling alone determining to share a room in order to save on cost (col. 1, lines 38-41).
- b. Beyda, et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,160,881 (Reference B of the attached PTO-892) teaches independent phone extensions given to guests that have made the determination to share a hotel room (col. 5, lines 62-63).

Art Unit: 3628

- c. Hotel Room-Sharing Form, TENTH ANNUAL ACM-SIAM SYMPOSIUM ON DISCRETE ALGORITHMS, July 9, 1998 (Reference U of the attached PTO-892; hereinafter "SODA '99 Form") teaches a list of conference attendees who wish to share a hotel room to reduce expenses.

The above references are only cited to substantiate the previously stated findings of Official Notice by the Examiner and therefore do not result in a new basis for rejection.

Claim Objections

6. Claim 22 is objected to because of the following informalities: "ballet" in line 3 appears to be a typographical error. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 30 and 32-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizenburg, et al., U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0026336 (Reference A of the PTO-892 part of paper no. 20070425) in view of Tso, U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2001/0049637 (Reference B of the PTO-892 part of paper no. 20070425).

9. As per claim 30, Eizenburg, et al. teaches a system operable to provide a group travel service over the Internet, comprising a server executing software for implementing the group travel service, said server being bidirectionally coupled to the Internet (§ 0009), said server being further configured to provide at least one tool at the

Art Unit: 3628

group trip homepage to respond to potential group trip participants accessing the group trip homepage to become group trip participants (§ 0074), further comprising a tool configured to at least track responses of individual group trip participants including mode of travel related information and hotel accommodation related information enabling a plurality of group trip participants to coordinate the booking of flights, seating and hotel rooms (§§ 0073, 0084). Eizenburg, et al. does not explicitly teach the server is configured to contact potential group trip participants to provide a link to a group trip homepage; which is taught by Tso (§§ 0084, 0093). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in order to eliminate the need to manually coordinate invitations (as taught by Tso; § 0003).

10. As per claim 32, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso teaches the system of claim 30 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches said group trip homepage is initially established by a group trip leader using at least one other tool provided by said server for customizing a homepage provided by the server (§§ 0028, 0035). Tso further teaches the group trip leader provides electronic mail contact information for the potential group trip participants to enable them to be contacted (§ 0059). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso in order to eliminate the need to manually coordinate invitations (as taught by Tso; § 0003).

11. As per claim 33, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso teaches the system of claim 30 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches another tool enables a group trip participant to establish a public profile that is viewable by other group trip participants (§§ 0061-62).

Art Unit: 3628

12. Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 10, 12-16, 19-20, 23-27, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield, U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0069093 (Reference C of the PTO-892 part of paper no. 20070425).

13. As per claim 1, Eizenburg, et al. teaches a method to organize a trip, comprising: at a travel service site, establishing a homepage for a trip (Abstract); and making at least travel arrangements related to the trip by using tools provided to the potential trip participants at the trip homepage (§ 0016). Eizenburg, et al. does not teach sending an electronic notification to potential trip participants from the travel service site for informing them of the existence of the trip homepage, and where one of said travel tools enables trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to the travel arrangements. Tso teaches sending an electronic notification to potential trip participants from the travel service site for informing them of the existence of the trip homepage (§§ 0023, 0093). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in order to eliminate the need to manually coordinate invitations (as taught by Tso; § 0003). Stanfield teaches where one of said travel tools enables trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to the travel arrangements (§ 0022). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Stanfield into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso in order to conveniently conduct polling for pre-travel business within the reservation system (as taught by Stanfield; § 0022).

14. As per claim 3, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 1 as described above. Tso further teaches sending an electronic notification includes sending a link to the homepage (§ 0084). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and

Art Unit: 3628

Stanfield in order to contact the server to bring up the desired page (as taught by Tso; ¶ 0084).

15. As per claim 4, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 1 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches travel arrangements comprise arranging payment for the trip (¶ 0027).

16. As per claim 5, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 1 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches travel arrangements comprise arranging accommodations during the trip (¶ 0027).

17. As per claim 7, Eizenburg, et al. teaches a method to provide a group travel service over the Internet, comprising: at a travel service site, establishing a homepage for a group trip by a group leader (Abstract) and making travel arrangements related to the group trip by using tools provided to the potential trip participants at the group trip homepage (¶ 0016). Eizenburg, et al. does not teach the group trip leader identifying at least email addresses of potential group trip participants, and automatically contacting the potential group trip participants from the travel service site for providing them with a link to the group trip homepage, and where one of said travel tools enables trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to the travel arrangements. Tso teaches the group trip leader identifying at least email addresses of potential group trip participants (¶¶ 0007, 0023), and automatically contacting the potential group trip participants from the travel service site for providing them with a link to the group trip homepage (¶ 0023). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in order to eliminate the need to manually coordinate invitations (as taught by Tso; ¶ 0003). Stanfield teaches where one of said travel tools enables trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to the travel arrangements (¶ 0022). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Stanfield into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso in order to conveniently conduct

Art Unit: 3628

polling for pre-travel business within the reservation system (as taught by Stanfield; ¶ 0022).

18. As per claim 9, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 7 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches travel arrangements comprise arranging payment for the trip (¶ 0027).

19. As per claim 10, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 7 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches travel arrangements comprise arranging accommodations during the trip (¶ 0027).

20. As per claim 12, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 7 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches enabling a member of the public to learn of the existence of the group trip, and join the group trip as a group trip participant (¶ 0064).

21. As per claim 13, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 7 as described above. Tso further teaches establishing a travel log album for the trip, and giving group trip participants access to the travel log album (¶ 0067). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield to set up a previous event information page where users share photographs and present them along with other information on the event (as taught by Tso; ¶ 0066).

22. As per claim 14, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 7 as described above. Tso further teaches establishing a travel log album for the trip (¶ 0067), and giving both group trip participants and members of the public access to the travel log album (¶ 0068). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield to set up a previous event information page where users can view photographs along with other information on the event (as taught by Tso; ¶ 0066).

Art Unit: 3628

23. As per claim 15, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the method of claim 14 as described above. Tso further teaches at least group trip participants are enabled to upload photographs to the travel log album (§ 0071), and where group trip participants and members of the public are enabled to download photographs from the travel log album (§ 0071). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the method taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield so that users can acquire high resolution copies of event images (as taught by Tso; § 0072).

24. As per claim 16, Eizenburg, et al. teaches a system operable to provide a group travel service over the Internet, comprising a server executing software for implementing the group travel service (§ 0009), said server being bidirectionally coupled to the Internet (§§ 0009, 0022); said server being further configured to respond to potential group trip participants accessing the group trip homepage to make travel arrangements related to the group trip by using tools provided to the potential trip participants at the group trip homepage (Abstract), said travel arrangements comprising at least one of arranging payment for the trip and arranging accommodations during the trip (§ 0027). Eizenburg, et al. does not teach the server is configured to respond to a group trip leader identifying contact information for potential group trip participants to automatically contact the potential group trip participants for providing them with a link to a group trip homepage, and where one of said travel tools enables trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to the travel arrangements. Tso teaches the server is configured to respond to a group trip leader identifying contact information for potential group trip participants to automatically contact the potential group trip participants for providing them with a link to a group trip homepage (§§ 0007, 0023). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in order to eliminate the need to manually coordinate invitations (as

Art Unit: 3628

taught by Tso; ¶ 0003). Stanfield teaches where one of said travel tools enables trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to the travel arrangements (¶ 0022). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Stanfield into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso in order to conveniently conduct polling for pre-travel business within the reservation system (as taught by Stanfield; ¶ 0022).

25. As per claim 19, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches establishing a travel service homepage for enabling a member of the public to learn of the existence of the group trip, and to join the group trip as a group trip participant using at least the group trip homepage (¶ 0064).

26. As per claim 20, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Tso further teaches establishing a travel log album for the trip at the travel service site (¶ 0067), and providing both group trip participants and members of the public access to the travel log album (¶ 0068), where at least group trip participants are enabled to upload photographs to the travel log album (¶ 0071), and where group trip participants and members of the public are enabled to download photographs from the travel log album (¶ 0071). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield to set up a previous event information page where users can view photographs along with other information on the event (as taught by Tso; ¶ 0066) and so that users can acquire high resolution copies of event images (as taught by Tso; ¶ 0072).

27. As per claim 23, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Tso further teaches a tool enabling group trip participants to post messages to a group message board (¶ 0091). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to

Art Unit: 3628

incorporate the above teachings of Tso into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield so that users can comment on content posted by others (as taught by Tso; ¶ 0091).

28. As per claim 24, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches a tool enabling tracking of group trip participants with respect to at least one or more of participation response, payment status, flight itinerary and number, seat assignment, hotel accommodation and room assignment (¶ 0073).

29. As per claim 25, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches a tool enabling tracking of a group trip participant's personal itinerary, where access to the group trip participant's personal itinerary is granted only to that group trip participant (¶ 0075).

30. As per claim 26, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches a tool enabling a group trip participant to establish a public profile that is viewable by other group trip participants (¶¶ 0061-62).

31. As per claim 27, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. further teaches a tool enabling at least the group trip leader to post at least one of documents and hyperlinks related to the trip (¶ 0090).

32. As per claim 31, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso teaches the system of claim 30 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso does not teach another tool enables group trip participants to vote on at least one matter related to travel arrangements; which is taught by Stanfield (¶ 0022). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Stanfield into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso in

Art Unit: 3628

order to conveniently conduct polling for pre-travel business within the reservation system (as taught by Stanfield; ¶ 0022).

33. Claims 6, 11, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield as applied to claims 1, 7, and 16 above, in further view of Official Notice as supported above by McNulty, Beyda, et al., and SODA '99 Form.

34. As per claims 6, 11, and 17, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the methods of claims 1 and 7 and the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso does not explicitly teach the travel arrangements further comprise determining which trip participants will share lodging accommodations during the trip. Official Notice was taken that it is old and well-known to determine which trip participants will share lodging accommodations. It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above finding of Official Notice into Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield because some members of a group will desire share accommodations to save on cost and therefore want to arrange accordingly.

35. Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield as applied to claim 16 above, in further view of Walker, et al., U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2003/0064807 (Reference C of the attached PTO-892).

36. As per claim 21, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield does not teach where said tool that enables participants to vote allows group participants to vote on whether to allow a proposed group participant to join the group; which is taught by Walker, et al. (¶ 0132). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above

Art Unit: 3628

teachings of Walker, et al. into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield so that current group members have an opportunity to approve a new member (as taught by Walker, et al.; ¶ 0132). Eizenburg, et al. further teaches the participants are trip participants (Abstract).

37. Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield as applied to claim 16 above, in further view of Vogt, et al., U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2003/0028595 (Reference D of the attached PTO-892).

38. As per claim 22, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield does not explicitly teach the group trip leader determines at least one of a duration of a particular voting-related ballot, a subject of a voting-related ballot, and whether a simple majority is sufficient to win a ballot, and where a vote cast by a group trip participant is selectively one of kept secret or made public; which is taught by Vogt, et al., (¶ 0052). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Vogt, et al. into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield to provide for anonymous responses to a poll instituted to gather the opinions of the group (as taught by Vogt, et al.; ¶ 0052).

39. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield as applied to claim 16 above, in further view of SODA '99 Form.

40. As per claim 28, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield does not teach a tool enabling group trip participants to determine those group trip participants that will share a hotel room, said room sharing tool creating lists and enabling group trip participants to select at least one roommate by entering their name

Art Unit: 3628

in one of the lists; which is taught by SODA '99 Form. It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of SODA '99 Form into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield so that trip participants can reduce expenses (as taught by SODA '99 Form). SODA '99 does not explicitly dictate that the lists are organized by room, however this is a mere choice of arrangement of the data contained on the list. Arranging a list of potential roommates by hotel room is a predictably successful expedient to a reader of a list of shared roommates, and would be readily apparent to a skilled artisan upon a reading of the applied references. "[I]t is proper to take into account not only specific teachings of the reference but also the inferences which one skilled in the art would reasonably be expected to draw therefrom." *Preda*, 401 F.2d at 826.

41. Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield as applied to claim 16 above, in further view of Vogt, et al. and SODA '99 Form.

42. As per claim 29, Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield teaches the system of claim 16 as described above. Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield does not teach a tool enabling a group trip participant to invite another group trip participant to share a hotel room, where the invited group trip participant is enabled to accept or reject the invitation. Vogt, et al. teaches a tool enabling a group trip participant to invite another group trip participant to share a venture, where the invited group trip participant is enabled to accept or reject the invitation (¶ 0054). It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of Vogt, et al. into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso and Stanfield to conveniently receive an answer from a invitee via a link to a web page with a just a button click (as taught by Vogt, et al.; ¶ 0054). Vogt, et al. does not explicitly teach the venture is a stay in a hotel room; which is taught by

Art Unit: 3628

SODA '99 Form. It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to incorporate the above teachings of SODA '99 Form into the system taught by Eizenburg, et al. in view of Tso, Stanfield, and Vogt, et al. so that trip participants can reduce expenses (as taught by SODA '99 Form).

Conclusion

43. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Fiala, et al., U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0091556 (Reference E of the attached PTO-892) teaches methods for facilitating communication between members of online communities based upon shared travel-related interests.

44. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

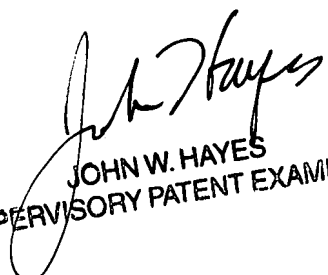
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

45. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Daniel P. Vetter whose telephone number is (571) 270-1366. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 8am to 6pm.

Art Unit: 3628

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on (571) 272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


JOHN W. HAYES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER